Enabling provisions provided in the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, through amendment in 2006, for preparing reserve wise Tiger Conservation Foundation, for involving local stakeholder communities.

Enabling provisions provided in the Weldlife (Protection) Act, 1972, through amendment in 2006, for creating State level Steering Committees by States under the Chief Minister for ensuring coordination, monitoring, protection and conservation of tiger, copredators and prey animals.

National Afforestation Programme in Goa

3278. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

whether National Afforestation Programme is being implemented in the State of Goa;

the essential features of the programme;

the projects undertaken in the State of Goa, since the commencement of the programme; and

the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The National Afforestation Programme is aimed at regeneration of degraded forests and adjoining areas through decentralized two-tier set-up of Forest Development Agencies (FDAs) at forest division level and Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) at village level.

(c) and (d) Three FDA projects have been approved in Goa so far at a total project cost of Rs. 239.21 lakh to treat total project area of 1250 ha. through 26 Village Forest Committees under JFMCs. Subsequently the State has requested to revise these projects in light of detailed assessment of the type of area available and has submitted revised project proposals based on the actual area availability appropriate for different types of interventions and regeneration models.

Forest cover of the State of Goa

3279. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

the present forest cover of the State of Goa;

the changes in the cover since 1961, till this date;

the efforts made by Government as also by the State Government as to increase the forest cover;

the method adopted to assess the forest Cover; and

when was the last assessment made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) The forest cover of the State of Goa, as per 2005 assessment made by Forest Survey of India (FSI) is 2,164 km^2.

The forest cover of Goa is not available as on 1961. First time the assessment of forest cover was done only in 1987. The forest cover of the State of Goa in 1987 was 1,240 km^2 and in 2005 it is 2,164 km^2. The increase is mainly on account of technological developments as smaller patches and cashew/coconut plantations are also included in the assessment.

The following steps have been taken by the Ministry to improve the forest cover on the country:

(i) The Ministry is implementing National Afforestation Programme (NAP) through the Forest Development Agencies (FDAs) at the forest division level and the Joint Forest Management Committees at the village level.

(ii) Ministry has launched Grants-in-Aid for Greening India Scheme in Tenth Plan to augment production and use of Quality Planting Material (QPM) so that productivity of public and private land plantations is increased, and individuals and communities are encouraged to take up more tree planting.

(iii) A new Scheme, Gram Van Yojana (GVY), has been mooted for afforestation on non-forest lands involving PRIs. Scheme to be launched in Eleventh Plan for which an allocation of Rs. 900 crores has been made.

(iv) New Eco-Task Force (ETF) Battalions of ex-servicemen are being established in collaboration with the States to regenerate difficult and inaccessible areas. Two new ETF battalions are being raised for Assam during the year.

The State Government is making all out efforts to restock the degraded Forest areas under various scheme of the State Government, Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) and under Compensatory Afforestation. Seedlings are also distributed to the general public, fanners, NGO's etc. on nominal payment or free of cost to plant over the waste land, vacant land and fallow land. Besides, the Forest Department is also supplying free seedlings to Panchayat, Schools, Colleges, Educational Institutions to encourage mass plantation during Vanamahotsav.

Forest Survey of India (FSI) uses remote sensing technology wherein satellite data is interpreted and then ground verification is done.

The last forest cover assessment pertains to 2005, the results of which were published in 'State of Forest Report 2005' in February, 2008.

Sewage treatment plants

3280, SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

whether it is a fact that it is necessary to set up sewage treatment plants under Ganga and Yamuna Action Plan;

if so, the details of the treatment plants working in the different States; and

whether Government is also providing funds for this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EN VIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) have been set up in different identified towns as one of the core pollution abatement schemes under the Ganga Action Plan (GAP) and Yamuna Action Plan (YAP). These plants are meant for treating